



**Letters From Dr. Julian P.
Johnson, Elizabeth
Bruce, and Sahabji
Maharaj (Anand Sarup) of
Dayal Bagh**

DR. JOHNSON'S LETTER

RADHASWAMI SATSANG
P.O. Dera Baba Jaimal Singh
Dera Baba Jaimal Singh
VIA BEAS DISTT. (AMRITSAR)

7th September, 1932

My dear Miss Bruce,

I intended to write to you sooner after my return from Agra; but many things have kept me very busy. I have felt like expressing myself rather poetically and romantically about my delightful visits with you, so much did I enjoy them. But even if I limit myself to strictly prosaic expressions, it would take many adjectives to describe my pleasure and real joy in meeting you, and visiting with you, the only woman of my own race and country whom I have met so far in all India, and the fact that you are here in pursuit of the same lofty ideals, has

made this meeting doubly significant. I was very sorry that I had no longer time to spend with you and I assure you of my great appreciation of your very kind invitation to stay there longer and how you would feed me real American food. All of that would have been a great treat. But you know that my purpose in India is not sightseeing or pleasure or recreation. It is the very serious business of seeking the 'Light' within, and all things must give way to that one pursuit. I must follow the Master each day in every detail, doing His work and conforming to His will, so far as lies in my power.

The trip with my Master has endeared Him to me and convince me more than ever of His true greatness and of His genuine divinity. There is not one lingering doubt left. I know I am in good hands and in hands that will lead me to the Highest Regions in due time. There is no doubt but He has reached those regions and is Master of all the intervening Regions. Hence, He is able to help His disciples to reach those regions. He is able to help us overcome the adverse actions of mind, while we are struggling to concentrate and go within. Without his help this troublesome mind and Maya would not permit us to enter the Real Path.

I have thought much about you and I sincerely wish I had an opportunity to talk more with you, especially

concerning the Five Names and the journey inside, by way of the Five Stations whose names I gave you. It is quite incomprehensible to me how your leader or Guru has not made you familiar with those things when they are so essential to a successful journey within. Our business is to go to Sach Khand, the first plane of the pure spiritual realm. After that Sat Purush will take us on up by His own love and power. We must make that journey by regular stages, one station at a time, exposing and mastering each Region as we enter and pass it. That can be done only by means of the Five Names given you, with a definite knowledge of those Five Regions through which we are to pass. You can not make the journey by taking the Name of the Supreme Region and expect to jump to that Region right over all of the others. For one has to gain certain development as he goes along, fitting him to enter and pass from one Region to the another. It is definitely a matter of successive stages and progressive unfoldment. All of this is fixed for us and it can not be changed or modified, if we are to believe Soamiji, the Founder of this system. I am going to quote verbatim a paragraph from the Prose Sar Bachan. It is paragraph 16. It reads as follows:-

“Up to this place are the regions of Shabda (Word), or Nad (Sound). Corresponding to the five regions from

Sat Loka down to Sahasdal Kamal, there are five words or Shabdas which can be made known to us by a Perfect Preceptor or Sant Sat Guru. Each region has its own distinctive word, having its own distinct form. The fifth word is in the Sat Loka. It is not possible to give any description, oral or written, of the word current beyond that. There is no parallel in this world to illustrate that sound. The Adept will only know that word when He reaches that region. The Five Words mark the five regions. It is with the sound of the word of each region that the soul ascends from one region to another. The ascent of the spirit is absolutely impossible in any other way, especially in this age of Kal-Yuga."

[Note: This paragraph quoted above by Dr. Johnson is from Sar Bachan Poetry, Part One, Huzur Maharaj Rai Saligram Bahadur's Abstract of Soamiji's Teachings.]

So, we have the highest authority given us to show the vital importance of the Five Names in this method of Yoga and it is quite clear that no one has any authority to change this method, if we are to believe in Soamiji at all. If someone else can come along in less than a hundred years after Him and change the most vital part of His system, then I think we can have little confidence in any of it. But the fact that so many in the last century have successfully made the journey by that method, I

think, has quite well established its value and correctness. I have yet to hear any one who has reached the higher regions by the use of one name alone and without even a knowledge of those regions you are to pass. I think, my dear, your time has been spent in vain, seeking the perfect illumination, by means of the very limited knowledge of the essential names and Regions. I am anxious for you to get started right and make no mistake. Each region has its own distinct colours and sounds, also. But I did not give them to you, as they are not so vital. But will give them to you if you wish them. By means of these colours, sounds and many other facts and descriptions which our Master has told us, we are enabled to know just exactly where we are in the course of our inward journey. You were puzzled to know just how far you had gone. There is no possibility of being thus puzzled if you have the complete instructions given by the Real Sat Guru who has Himself been over that Path. You are entitled to that knowledge. Demand it. If your Guru can not give it to you, find out why.

Now, maybe I have written too much. But if I have erred, it is out of an earnest desire to help a sister who seeks the light and can not afford to miss the true Path.

If you care to discuss any of these things further, please write me fully and freely and I shall take pleasure in answering to the best of my ability.

I imagine if you were to see me today, you would not care to owe me as a fellow countryman. I am endeavoring to grow a beard and it looks terrible just now and feels about as bad as it looks. I have long had an ambition to grow a Van Dyke beard, and decided that now was a good opportunity. If I do not like it when it is full grown there is always the satisfaction that it can be cut off.

The weather is warm here. I imagine it is warm in Agra. They say we have only about one month more of hot weather, and it is not unbearable even now, like it was the first of June, before we left for the sea coast.

The Beloved Master has assigned to me a nice little bungalow standing a way off to itself, remote from most of the noise of the central part of this Dera or station and they are cleaning it up now and getting it ready for

me. It will be just fine for the meditations. Too much noise where I am, right in the centre of the station. I shall have flowers and plants and a real garden of my own, though I will not promise to work it myself. There is a secure wall all around to keep out too inquisitive visitors, a very secluded place. He said next year if I liked he would build another storey on top of it for sleeping. It is now only one storey building. And I am going to have an oven so I can have real American whole wheat biscuits. You surely must come and eat some of them with me. I have now arranged for the exclusive rights to the milk of one cow and so I can get some cream, I hope. My, but the cream and coffee at your place was good and I shall always remember your kindness in providing it.

Hoping to hear from you as soon as convenient, and with fraternal love and very best wishes, I am

Your fellow-student of the Way,
(Sd.) Julian P. Johnson

MISS BRUCE'S REPLY

DAYALBAGH

(AGRA)

30th September, 1932

My dear Mr. Johnson,

I owe you an apology for taking so much time in acknowledging your kind letter of the 7th instant. The fact of matter is that I drafted a reply and showed it to my Master along with your letter but He rejected it as being too strong and it had to be re-drafted.

Now, I must, first of all, thank you for your kind invitation to your new home. I shall certainly make use of it when a suitable opportunity presents itself. But I may make it clear that it will be too much to expect of me to absent myself from the bliss of Satsang here for the mere pleasure of the trip. I must wait for a suitable opportunity.

You are entirely misinformed regarding the teachings here and you can never get rid of your illusions till you clear your mind of pre-possessions. Every child of

Dayalbagh knows the five names you speak about but we, at the same time, know that 'Radhasoami' is the Supreme Word. You have taken the trouble of quoting a passage from the Sar Bachan Prose but you appear to have taken little trouble to understand it. It is not safe to pick up a passage and interpret it independent of the context. You simply hurt me and betray your ignorance when you say that it is an innovation to attach the importance, we do, to the name "Radhasoami". The passage you have quoted only enumerates the intermediary stages and emphasizes that the spirit of a devotee can pass from stage to stage and reach the highest region only by catching the respective sounds of these regions. It does not explain how and by what means the devotee can catch these respective sounds. It is no joke to curb the mind and establish contact with the spiritual sounds. This point has been explained in paragraph 67 of the same book. It means:-

"The path of the Sant Satguru is the highest, (leads to the highest region), and He inculcates the worship of the true Supreme Being, i.e., Satyapursha Radhasoami Who is beyond the regions of Brahm and Par-Brahm so that a soul may go across the boundaries of Maya. A true Sadh has access up to the Tenth Door or the Sunna region and He alone is a Yogeshwara Gyani. The persons who stop short of this region occupy a

lower status than a Sadh. For these reasons it behoves every individual caring for true emancipation to adopt the Isht (goal) of the Saints, viz., Satyapurash Radhasoami. The name Radhasoami has been manifested by the Supreme Being Himself. The person who succeeds in getting initiated into the secrets of his name and surrendering himself to Radhasoami recites it according to the method prescribed by the Saints or repeats it internally or hears its sound within him, is bound to be blessed with true emancipation. A few days' practice will automatically reveal to him the truth of this statement."

Now Dr. Johnson read, chew and digest internally the teachings contained in this passage and also supplement your knowledge by reading the first few lines of Sar Bachan Poetry and the few articles of the "Discourses on Radhasoami Faith" on the subject and see how far you are justified in coming to the conclusion that my time has been spent in vain. Each region has, no doubt, its own distinct deity and sound but, like a golden thread, the Supreme Spiritual Current, i.e. the Prime Current that evolved the entire creation and that manifested the Prime Word, "Radhasoami," represents both the source sound and the current sound of the Supreme Spiritual Current, while names like "Om" represent only the sounds of the manifest functions of

the various deities. And these functional sounds or the manifest holy names of the various deities are as distinct from the sounds of the eternal spiritual currents, supplying spiritual energy to the deities, as the vibrations at the mental planes -- thought the result of the passage of the spirit to the mental planes -- are distinct from the spirit sounds; or as blue light produced by the passage of white light through a blue lens is distinct from white light. But to quote the words of Maharaj Sahab, "This distinction is not apparent to those who do not possess access to the innermost quarter of spirit." The holy name Radhasoami is present everywhere in creation and can be heard at the innermost plane where the spirit current is acting. It is for these reasons that Soamiji Maharaj has taught:-

1. Whoever shall sing the Holy Name "Radhasoami" will assuredly cross (the ocean of mundane existence), and, freed from the tortures of Kal, he will enjoy perfect peace and immunity from pain.
2. So boundless is this Name that no one comprehends its significance, whoever comes to understand it reaches the other shore, never to be born again.
3. Sing, Sing, therefore the Radhasoami Name and attain the summum bonum of human life. This alone is

the real Name of the Supreme Being; implant it in your heart.

I cannot resist the temptation of adding here a passage from the “Discourses” to expose the folly of those who give preference to the names of subordinate deities over the Holy Name of the Supreme Being. The passage occurs at the end of Article 70 of the book and runs as follows:-

“What the marvellous effect of the Supreme Holy Name Radhasoami is, in respect of the concentration it produces at the spiritual centre and in overcoming the outward and material influences, can be experienced after a short trial, if the august name be spiritually repeated in the correct way at the spiritual centre.”

[The quote above is from the Discourses on Radhasoami Faith by Maharaj Sahab.]

I wonder why it never occurred to you or your friends and associates there that when it is admitted that the names of the subordinate deities have the power of overcoming intervening resistance and leading the spirit of a devotee to the thrones of respective deities, it should also be possible for the Name of the Supreme Being to overcome the intervening resistance and lead

the spirit to the Throne of the Supreme Being. Do you really mean to suggest that the Name of the Supreme Being, which is believed to be the Supreme Word or the Supreme Name, is impotent in the lower regions and can show its powers only in the region of the Supreme Being? If that be the case, I would make bold to say that the Satguru is also impotent in the lower regions, in-as-much-as, He is only the manifestation and embodiment of the Supreme Current of the Supreme Being. I am sure you will feel shocked at this conclusion. But it is a conclusion which is forced upon us by your own logic about the inefficacy of the Supreme Name.

In the end, I would congratulate you on adopting Indian modes of living and also growing a beard and express my hope that you will reconsider your position in the light of my reply.

With hearty Radhasoami and best wishes,

Yours sincerely
(Sd.) ELIZABETH BRUCE

SOME FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF OUR FAITH

INTERESTING CORRESPONDENCE

We are indebted to the courtesy of Sister Sushila (Miss Bruce) for being able to reproduce her correspondence with Dr. J.P. Johnson, an American seeker who has come to India and is now a follower of Sardar Sawan Singh Sahab of Beas. When the latter came in August last and stayed in Soamibagh (Agra) on the occasion of the Janam Ashtami Bhandara held there, Dr. Johnson also came with him. It was then that this American gentleman paid a visit to Dayalbagh and had also an interview with His Holiness Sahabji Maharaj -- the points that were raised during the course of conversation have been summarized in Huzur's Diary for August 22, published in our esteemed local contemporary, the Prem Pracharak, dated 12th September, 1932. It was also then that Dr. Johnson met Sister Sushila and formed her acquaintance. (Ed. D.H.)

In the last issue of the Dayalbagh Herald, we had the pleasure of publishing under the above headlines, some interesting correspondence that passed recently between Dr. Johnson and Sister Sushila (Miss Bruce). In addition to writing to Sister Sushila, Dr. Johnson addressed a rather stiff letter to His Holiness Sahabji Maharaj, perhaps under the impression that within so short a period of his arrival in India, he has been able to lay his finger on our weakest point that had hitherto remained unknown and undiscovered. We are extremely grateful for permission to publish this interesting correspondence also for the delectation of our readers. (Ed. D.H.)

DR. JOHNSON'S LETTER

Dera Baba Jaimal Singh ji
Via Beas District Amritsar
THE PUNJAB, INDIA

SAHABJI MAHARAJ SAHAB
AGRA, U.P.

MY DEAR MAHARAJ JI,

Since my visit to Agra I have wanted to write to you personally, and after noting in the little paper, under the heading of Notes from your diary a reference to my visit, I decided that it was quite fitting and proper for me to write this letter.

Before leaving Agra I wished for an opportunity to express to you personally my very great appreciation and admiration of your Model Industries. But our time was so very limited. I greatly enjoyed my all-too brief visit with yourself and your staff of workers. The organization and output of your Model Industries are quite remarkable. The quality of most of the goods manufactured seemed to me to be super-excellent. The workers all appeared so clean and cheerful and skilled

in their several duties. The dairy I especially enjoyed seeing. It is equal to the best I have seen in America and is nothing short of a miracle here in India where they are not accustomed to such things. I wish you in the most wholehearted manner to congratulate you and all of your helpers on your splendid achievement. I believe your work is a blessing to all India. It is a pity that such industries could not be established in all important centres throughout the country.

However, while delighted at the success you have achieved in these industries, the question kept going through my mind -- does all of this help the spiritual life of the workers; or does it, by its very success, tend to bind them more closely to the material world? I note in your comments on my question put to Miss Bruce that I might be expected to reflect such opinions from the Beas Satsang with which I am connected. But on the contrary, I am here under the instructions of the Beloved Master of this Satsang because from the very beginning, while in America, learned that He was wholly given to spiritual instruction and the spiritual uplift of His disciples. And that is one reason why I am still happy to have privilege to love Him and to sit at His holy feet.

But I do not wish discussion or argument. I deeply regret that any division should exist among the ranks of

the Radhasoami Faith -- a faith which seems to me to be the very cream and perfection of all systems of religion or spiritual science. The one crucial point seems to be: Does all of this industrial activity, and the prosperity growing out of it, tend to add to, or detract from, the spiritual output of the individuals concerned? And I do not believe the answer can be obtained by intellectual argument or discussion. It may be obtained, possibly, by a personal canvass of the lives and experiences of all the four thousand workers in Dayalbagh and of an equal number of devotees not so connected with any such industries. Permit me to say quite frankly that if by such a canvass it could be shown that these industries contribute a decided advantage to the workers in their spiritual development and progress on the inward and upward journey toward their eternal Home, then I shall give to the plan my unqualified endorsement. (Not that my endorsement would mean anything to anybody). In such a case -- a complete vindication of the plan -- you would take rank among the world's wisest and greatest benefactors, and it would appear that all future Spiritual Teachers might well emulate your example. This writer would indeed be happy if such a demonstration could be made and the policy vindicated. The argument for it seems to be incontrovertible and absolutely convincing. But unfortunately it appears that history is against it. In all

ages it seems that just in proportion as men become engrossed in worldly activities and begin to enjoy the prosperity resulting from them, they begin to lose interest in spiritual pursuits and their attention becomes more and more fixed upon material pursuits and pleasures. Of course, it should not be so; but unfortunately it seems to work out that way. Hence the Wise Men of all ages have sought to draw men's attention away from worldly matters, and they have found that in most cases poverty and extreme hardship were the best agents to drive men to the feet of the Master.

I want to say in conclusion that this letter expresses only my own private opinions and convictions and for them I alone am responsible. Further, I am happy to say that during all of the three and one half months I have been here with the Master and the disciples of the Beas Satsang I have heard only expressions of love and kindness for yourself and people. In fact, our Master has very definitely said to me that He would be happy indeed if all units of this faith could get together in a common brotherhood of love and good fellowship and He stands ready to co-operate with you and all the rest to that end. Praying that you will give thought and consideration toward such a gracious end, I assure you of my fraternal love and very best wishes.

Hoping that I am not presuming too much in writing this way, and humbly hoping that substantial ground may be found for a more perfect understanding and practical union of all who walk this Noble Path, I am,

Cordially yours,
(Sd.) JULIAN P. JOHNSON

HUZUR SAHABJI MAHARAJ'S REPLY TO DR. JOHNSON

DAYALBAGH
Agra, September 27, 1932

Dear Dr. Johnson,

I have before me your letter without date which reached me on the 24th instant. I must admire the bravery you have shown in throwing out a challenge to me and I shall gladly wait to see whether you have also got the courage to stand the hard logic of facts. I have had, besides, an occasion to read your letter of the 7th instant which you were good enough to write to Miss

Bruce and which contains several flings at me. But would it not have been more dignified if the challenge had come from your beloved master, or, at least, after making an effort to know the whole truth about Dayalbagh from him or from our literature? In the 3rd paragraph of your letter to me, you point out that you have brought your notions from America and, in the 5th paragraph thereof, you say, "This letter expresses only my private opinions and convictions and for them I alone am responsible." This shows that you did not take the trouble of consulting him, although living so close to him. In doing this, I am afraid, you have gone against the rules of jigyasa and also your own decision, viz., "I must follow the Master each day in every detail," so soon after arriving at it.

To dispel all misunderstanding, I would at the very outset tell you that I am prepared to accept the challenge if it comes from your Master. You can tell him that I do maintain that the brothers and sisters, here in the pure atmosphere of Dayalbagh are decidedly better in all respects than their social equals elsewhere. But you are wrong in thinking that these people constitute our entire Satsang Community. They are only a small fraction of the community spread all over the country. You are also wrong in thinking that all the men living in Dayalbagh work in our industries. It is only about 20% of

them that are employed in the industries. You are again wrong in inferring that the existing industrial activity at Dayalbagh is the "crucial point" responsible for division in the ranks of our Faith. There was no such activity of this kind in the time of Huzur Maharaj, Maharaj Sahab and Sarkar Sahab, and yet both your Master and Master's Master chose to fly their own flag. You may take it from me that there is no chance here for prosperity of the kind you have in the West that makes people forget God and Religion. We are only leading a clean, healthy and peaceful life by trying to live up to the ideals set before us by our Revered Leaders. Many of the people are working honorarily, and not one of them gets more than a living wage. The cheer and radiance, on the faces of the residents here are not due to worldly prosperity. They are the results of the spiritual atmosphere of Dayalbagh.

You will, perhaps, be surprised to know that the chief point you have raised in your letter, has been answered by me times out of number, both by word of mouth and in writing. Here is a paragraph from a pamphlet on Dayalbagh published in 1928 that will speak for itself:-

"We very well realize that life here on earth is but short-lived and that little importance is to be attached to worldly success and prosperity. We also very well know

that educational, industrial and charitable institutions are not directly conducive to spiritual progress. But whatever we have done in the past and whatever we are doing in the present, is in obedience to the August Commands of our Revered Leaders and in the consciousness that we are only doing our duty -- our duty to the Worshipful Lord and our duty to Those Whom we hold in the highest esteem, our duty to our brothers, sisters and children, and our duty to humanity at large. It is our humble wish and prayer that the Supreme Father, in His unbounded Mercy, be graciously pleased to grant that we may keep to the path of duty unto our last breath, so that when the time comes for us to lay down the reins of office, we may do so with an easy conscience and with the satisfaction that our faults and frailties, innumerable as they are, have not stood in the way of the fulfilment of His Divine Will -- Radhasoami."

I would here add that the experience of the past 19 years has shown us that the institutions at Dayalbagh have not only been useful in saving hundreds of children of the community from going astray, but also in relieving thousands of parents from the burden and anxiety of upbringing their sons and daughters and enabling them to attend to their devotional practices undisturbed.

If you do not mind, I would ask you whether the brothers owing allegiance to your Satsang do or do not follow any worldly pursuits and whether they are all recluses and apostles of single felicity. If they are following worldly pursuits and leading the lives of householders, they are clearly doing exactly the same that the workers here are doing, of course, with the difference that they are living in a different atmosphere. And if these pursuits result in the sort of harm you have mentioned in your letter, I think you will be well advised to bestow your attention on your own men first, it is no use practising a thing and covering it with the fig-leaf of a convenient phrase.

Some time ago I read in a book that consciousness is the surface of our minds, of which, as of the earth, we do not know the inside, but only the crust. I am sorry I have to apply these words to your case. While in your letter to me you renounce the little arrangement that we have made here to make life tolerable for some of our brothers and sisters as likely to detract from the spiritual outlook of 'the individuals concerned' in your letter to Miss Bruce you give vent to your feelings of gratification at the comforts provided for you at the Dera in the following words:-

"The Beloved Master has assigned to me a nice little bungalow standing a way off to itself ... and they are cleaning it up now and getting it ready for me ... I shall have flowers and plants and real garden of my own, though I will not promise to work it myself ... He said next year if I liked he would build another storey on top of it for sleeping. It is now only one storey building, and I am going to have an oven, so I can have real American whole wheat biscuits ... I have now arranged for the exclusive rights to the milk of one cow and so I can get some cream, I hope." Are you not, Dr. Johnson, getting much more than the poor workers here, with the only difference that you do not work for what you get? Do the poor souls here stand to lose in spirituality for the mere sin of working for an honest living? And it is extreme hardship in procuring necessities of life and the want of comforts of the kind mentioned by you that we, to quote your own words, "the best agents to drive men to the feet of the Master"?

And there is one thing more that I would like to ask you here. Why did you not open your mind to me when you did the honour of a visit last month? If, as you say in your letter to Miss Bruce, your purpose in India is not sight-seeing, pleasure or recreation, why did you not make it convenient to attend our Satsang and study the spiritual side of life in Dayalbagh instead of spending so

much of your precious time in seeing the Taj, Sikandra etc., and why, in Dayalbagh also, of all things you chose to see the Model Industries and the Dairy?

I am sorry I have had to write all these unpleasant things, but I am sure you will not mind it as I see no better way of helping you out of the mire of wrong notions than breaking the crust of your consciousness a little.

You have been pleased to say in your letter, "the wise men of all ages have sought to draw men's attention away from worldly matters." A most sweeping statement indeed! Do you count Krishna among the wise men of the world or not? If you do, you will do well to reflect over his life for a moment and to read the following from Chapter III of the Bhagwat Gita:-

Sloka 22

"There is nothing in the three worlds, O Parrtha! that should be done by Me, nor anything unattained that might be attained; yet I mingle in action."

Sloka 23

"For if I mingled not ever in action unwearied, men all round would follow My path, O son of Pritha!"

Sloka 24

"These worlds would fall into ruin, if I did not perform action; I should be the author of confusion of castes, and should destroy these creatures."

You will please also take the trouble of enquiring from some friends over there as to who was the founder of the city of Amritsar, the headquarters of your district. Was it not one of the great Gurus of the Sikh religion? But why refer you to old history when current history has got proofs to answer? Is not your own Beloved Master building a colony at Beas? At least this is what he told me personally some years ago. He was then also pleased to add that he was himself supervising and running the brickfield, and that it was a sort of work he has been doing all his life.

I think I must now pass on to the most important point in your letter. The facts recited above should be enough to

make it dear to you that although there may be a lot of difference in what you and we say yet the difference in what both you and we are practising, is no greater than between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. Gone are the days for the unreal atmosphere of a logic-hopping metaphysics. Thinkers now realize that thought without action is a disease.

I do not deny for a moment that there have been men in the world who preached the philosophy of renunciation of action. As a matter of fact, it is the seed sown by such people that is responsible in the main for most of our present miseries. Given a diseased constitution, a neurotic mind and a life of empty leisure and gloomy ennui and there emerges the proper physiology of a man preaching this unhealthy philosophy. Ours is the Bhakti-marg, the path of devotion and dedication -- not renunciation. Consult your Beloved Master on this point or read some of the Satsang literature in the subject, and you will understand the wide difference between the two paths.

Simple living, contentment, humility and non-attachment to worldly objects are no doubt virtues that have been given a place of honour in our religion, but they do not bear any special affinity to poverty. Hardships of life do exercise a deterrent effect on men and, under their

influence, many men do turn their attention to their Creator when no earthly assistance is forthcoming. They also do turn religiously-minded people deeply religious, but history records something different also. These conditions have also led individuals to suicide and nations to rebellion and revolution. I admit that people in hard circumstances have often resorted to prayer and to places of worship for help, but I very much doubt "that in most cases poverty and extreme hardship are the best agents to drive men to the feet of the Master." I would add that in Bhakti-marg the highest status is assigned only to God-loving and God-seeking devotees, and poverty is no stepping stone to the acquisition of these virtues. A beggar may be more attached to his old blanket and begging bowl than a rich man to his shawl and cup of gold, and a well-to-do person may be more God-loving and God-seeking than a poverty-stricken individual. History shows that, in ancient times, Raja Janak was more God-loving than all the paupers of his kingdom and, as late as in the last century, we have the example of our own Huzur Maharaj, our second Revered Leader, Who was a more earnest seeker of God than all the rich and poor of Agra.

If, however, you mean to suggest that intoxication of wealth is very detrimental to spiritual elevation, I would readily agree with you. But you should at the same time remember that so are all intoxications, including the intoxication of renunciation. It is for this reason that we are taught to discard attachment and intoxication of worldly objects and not action, i.e. worldly pursuits and worldly objects, and lead a life of service and dedication. This leads me to say something about service or sewa. In your letter to Miss Bruce, you have quoted at some considerable length from Sar Bachan. This shows that the holy writings of Our Revered Founder are receiving your attention. A perusal of these will disclose to anybody that Soamiji Maharaj had laid the utmost emphasis on the necessity of sewa. I would invite your attention specially to the following couplet:-

"Gur agya se jo shish karai, So kartut bhakti phal dei."
Rendered into English, it means:

"Whatever a devotee doeth in pursuance of the commands of the Satguru, beareth for him the truth of Bhakti."

Dear Dr. Johnson, when we know that what we are doing here is strictly in pursuance of the August Commands of Soamiji Maharaj, the Revered Founder of our religion -- commands supplemented and confirmed by one and all of our subsequent Satgurus --, when we know that in pursuing our activities we have no other motive than to secure the pleasure of our Satguru, when we know that hundreds and thousands of our brothers and sisters while enduring numerous hardships and privations are giving of their best in the spirit of service, and lastly, when actual experience has clearly shown to us that in doing all this we have been meriting greater grace of the Supreme Father from day to day, how then, can we give any weight to a conflicting opinion, coming from a friend, howsoever friendly, but ignorant of the very alphabet of our religion?

I know that my letter has become very lengthy, but I shall consider my labour amply rewarded if it succeeds in making at least two things clear to you, viz. (1) that we have very good reasons in support of our activities here and (2) that our minds are open to conviction. By

way of further proof of our bona fides with respect to no. 2, I may refer you to my letter dated the 21st September, 1932 to your Beloved Master inviting him to address the brothers and sisters affiliated to our Sabha during the next X'mas week, when we hope to have a record gathering. He is welcome to bring to light all our mistakes and show us better light on the occasion, if he can.

With best wishes and Radhasoami,

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.)

ANAND SARUP

To

Dr. J.P. JOHNSON, M.D.,
Dera Baba Jaimal Singh,
Via Beas (Distt. Amritsar)

DR. JOHNSON'S REJOINDER

Dera Baba Jaimal Singh
Via Beas Distt, Amritsar, Punjab
4th October, 1932

My Dear Sir,

Yours of the 27th ultimo received. I wish to thank you for the time given to answer my unimportant letter at such length. In your letter a few things appear which seem to demand a reply, otherwise I would not trouble you again.

1. Your bombardment of "hard logic of facts" directed "against the shell of my consciousness" I much fear has been another example of love's labour lost; or at least misdirected. For you have, at great length, undertaken to establish a proposition by argument, example and quoted authority, which I cheerfully conceded in my letter to you. You say I denounced what you were doing there. But on the contrary, I gave to it my unstinted praises, and said it was a blessing to all India. No one can question the value of activity in the necessary affairs of the world. But the one and only question in my mind was whether or not world activities, such as your

industries, can be carried on in connection with a school of spiritual instruction without detriment to the spiritual side of the work. That is the sole issue; not the value or importance of the work itself. And so far as that question goes, you have disposed of it, not by arguments of hard logic in favour of it, but by saying “Whatever we have done in the past and whatever we are doing in the present, is in obedience to the august commands of our revered leaders.” That ends the matter. Who am I that I should offer criticism, if this be the case? I might come back and demand proof that revered leaders have given you such commands. For they are certainly not in any of the published books. But it is a vain discussion, and so this must end the matter so far as I am concerned.

2. Two statements in your letter have rather startled me, coming from one in your exalted position. (a) The first one is to the effect that I am receiving accommodation here from the Master and Satsang for which I am rendering no service. Your exact words being: “The only difference being that you do not work for what you get.” By what stretch of imagination you could assume the responsibility of such a statement I cannot even guess. The statement is not only unkind, but it is absolutely untrue. For many years I have been accustomed to earn by my professional services, many times more than the cost of an ordinary living, even in America. Since

coming here I have given freely of my services to all Satsangis who needed them at any time I am called upon. Evidently the Master and Satsangis believe I am earning the accommodations I receive. If I do not work for what I get here, then I beg to suggest that by the same rule you are not working for what you get. (b) Your statement on the last page of your letter, ending in the words: “ignorant of the very alphabet of our religion”, is a rebuke which perhaps I deserve for my presumption. And since the “Rebuke of the wise is better than the praise of fools”, I must thank you for it. But I was under the impression that this religion inculcated, and its members actually practised, the principles of kindness and brotherly love. I know they do here. However much I might deserve them, I would be quite surprised if these charges of gross ignorance and of getting accommodations for nothing, were to be made against me by even the lowliest Satsangi here. I think they are better trained than that. I believe truly that even the humblest sweeper in this Satsang is sufficiently versed in the “alphabet of our religion” not to resort to such charges against a brother Satsangi. And what shall be said of one who so dare forgets the “alphabet of our religion,” while standing before the world as a Master and Exemplar of that religion?

So far as I am concerned this will end our discussion. Your references to my master I can not discuss. He is far better able to speak for himself than I am to speak for him. It is sufficient for me to say here that He is in no way responsible for this letter or the first one to you. I happen to know, however, that he always stands ready to cooperate in any plan to promote brotherly love and good fellowship. And in spite of your opinion of me, I would be happy to give you my hand in cordial fraternal love and join with you in any step that would bring about a better rapprochement between all units of this sublime Faith.

To
ANAND SARUP
Sahabji Maharaj
AGRA

Sincerely yours
(Sd.) JULIAN P. JOHNSON

NOTE: As Dr. Johnson declared the discussion as closed in the last para of his second letter, no reply was sent to it and thus the correspondence came abruptly to an end. (Ed. D.H.)

THE WAYS OF THE FAITHFUL

Our readers will recall that P.Bn. Miss Bruce is one of the devoted members of the small group of Satsangis in America. It has been suggested several times that we should publish short accounts of the lives of Bhaktas. We have so far resisted the temptation -- chiefly for the reason that those who know Dayalbagh feel that the latter is a living sermon on Bhakti... We cannot, however, resist the temptation of publishing a letter which has just been received from Miss Bruce, and which we are able to reproduce below by the courtesy of the Private Secretary to his Holiness. It demonstrates that distance and geographical boundaries do not set limits to the Grace of the Lord. (Ed. D.H.)

ELIZABETH BRUCE
ALATRA LABORATORIES
BEAUTY REQUISITES
NEW YORK
28.8.30

Holy Father,

The mere possibility of coming within Thy Holy Presence so soon, fills me with Joy and Peace, which I cannot describe. The happy day which has eluded me so long a time, is at last approaching. I am settling, all my affairs, which is not an easy thing, so many ties must be broken -- yet I wish to hasten my departure. I do not wish to lose one day, one hour, that might be spent in Thy Holy Presence. I wish to close this door upon the past, which has meant so much suffering, toil, agony and tears -- to open the door which leads to thee, to spiritual unfoldment, peace and eternal bliss.

Everything seems to conspire to delay me; the temptations and allurements of the world have multiplied a thousand-fold since I have made my decision to give up everything and come to Thy Holy Feet. Many difficulties have been placed in my path, disappointments have almost deluged me. No doubt

they are tests, little trials which I must rise above and prove the power of my soul to establish its identity with Thee. In spite of all obstacles in my path, my soul stands fearless and humble in the Light of Thy Divine Presence.

Through all the darkness, Thy Face, O Lord, has ever shone with a radiance that has uplifted me and given me the strength to meet my present obligations and prepare for the journey to India. Never have I lost sight of the fact, the "Lord is my Shepherd, He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul."

Some of my friends have scoffed at my plans, predicting all sorts of mishaps, or painting in glowing terms, the material fields open to me here. And indeed it may be true, that if I remain in America, there will be an opportunity for me to reap a rich material harvest.

O, my Father, what are these things to me now? My soul is hungry for the food of the spirit. I accept material things only in so far as they are needed to live an upright, useful life, or to contribute to my bodily health, that I may be allowed to make the best of the

opportunity of this incarnation. The most important thing to me now is to see Thy Holy Face and live within Thy Holy Land where the Earth is sanctified by Thy Presence.

Nothing else matters to me, least of all material things. I am impatient to be off and on my way to India. Each day brings me a little nearer to Thee, little nearer to the day for which I have been waiting through all this life and countless others. I have climbed slowly and painfully to this humble place at Thy Holy Feet.

And now nothing can take me away from Thee, nothing can turn me aside from my purpose. I have sought Thee too long, to allow anything or anybody to interfere with my determination to take up my abode within Thy Living Presence; to be as near to Thee as the duties of my daily life will permit.

But, there is one thing which has troubled me deeply. I had hoped to have had greater material means, before going to India, so that nothing might hamper the path of my spiritual unfoldment. Yet, I feel that I have sufficient funds to keep me within a safe margin and I can always work and use the knowledge of my training and

experience. And believe me, Dear Father, I have not the slightest fear of outcome of my plans. On the contrary, I am filled with a faith unfaltering, a courage indomitable. I am secure in contemplating my happiness on seeing Thee soon; I am like a bride going to meet the beloved. I am overwhelmed with a sense of love, a desire to win the rare gifts of Thy Love, Thy Grace. "More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb" (Psalm XIX).

I have but 5000 \$ (five thousand dollars in moneys) after the expenditures of my journey. I feel that I can live within this sum; however, if this does not meet with your approval and Your Holiness thinks that I should have a larger sum of money to assure the necessary living requirements and freedom from monetary worry and doubt, I will gladly return to America, where I can take my work again and make any amount which your wisdom thinks best and then I can return again to India. But first let me refresh myself in the sweet waters of Thy Grace. With Thy Blessing, upon my head I can go forth into the world of action and return when Thy Love recalls me.

Mr. Moorty and I have gone into this matter at great length and while he agreed with me that my original plans for remaining here until I accumulated 10,000 \$ (ten thousand dollars) was a very great one, still he felt he must leave the final decision with me; knowing there were far greater things involved than monetary considerations.

And even aside from this, there are hundreds of other things woven into the fabric of my life which only the soul can see; untold sufferings, silent tears, the aching heart that found all its emotions desecrated -- the broken ideal. I placed the highest trust in those I loved only to be deeply humiliated. I was sorely tried by those who ruthlessly took my money -- that I have earned on honest work -- for their own means. I feel that these things are not good for the soul. They intrude upon the inner peace and tranquillity; they take up too much time which should be given to higher things; too great suffering exhausts the body and consumes the spiritual energy.

I am fully aware of Thy Wisdom, Dear Father, and that Thou knowest all these things, but, I am presenting them as my one reason for hurrying away from this

material strife, this consuming energy, before trying to remain and reach the material independence which I had originally hoped to gain. I could remain even now -- though unwillingly -- but it would cost me dearly in time, overwork and the loss of Thy Holy Presence, for a long time to come.

It has not been an easy experience for me to make these 5000 \$ (five thousand dollars) -- many times I have failed, or money earned had to be shared with relatives, still I have bravely picked up the pieces and put them together again. But as I look backward at these experiences fraught with so much strife, worry and pain, I feel they were an unnecessary expenditure of vital energy, which should have been put to some better use. I would rather live simply and devote more time to spiritual development.

Life in a large city like New York, is a constant struggle for supremacy in one way or another; and with the mad, futile rushing about, it is only the rare few who can hear the voice of their own soul. Everything conspires to dazzle the outward vision, and while it may be true that millions of men and women are living righteous lives, here as elsewhere, seeking God in their own way, what does that profit me, for I am on the way to being in Thy Very Presence. Then why should I not flee from these

illusions? And go at once to Thy Side. Why should I hesitate because of a seeming need for more money? If it is Thy Wish, I should have a large amount of money, that in itself changes everything for me, only bid me return again to America, and I shall gladly do so. Then only shall I have a high purpose in attaining additional material wealth and I can take up my work with a joyous spirit, having seen Thy Holy Face, having heard Thy Heavenly Voice, and having been cleansed in the sweet dews of Thy Blessing. Indeed, I must have been granted a measure of Thy Grace, on the happy day I met Mr. Moorty at this time a year ago. With all his gentility and spiritual enthusiasm, he came as an answer to my ardent prayers for a Spiritual Preceptor. His devotion to our little group has been constant, his patience never ending, and we are indebted to Thy Wisdom for sending us such a loving Brother.

Thanking Thee greatly and humbly asking Thy Grace and Love.

I am
The Devoted Daughter
ELIZABETH BRUCE

**-- Above is all from, "Writings and
Speeches of Param Guru Huzur
Sahabji Maharaj, 1928 -- 1937",
Radhasoami Satsang Sabha,
Dayalbagh, Agra**